FORM B – BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Assessor's Number	USGS Quad	Area(s)	Form Number
20-123	ORLEANS		EAS.794

Town/City: Town of Eastham

Place: *(neighborhood or village)*: South Eastham

Address: 30 Smith Lane

Historic Name: James & Thankful Smith House

Uses: Present: single-family residence

Original: single-family residence

Date of Construction: ca. 1854

Source: deeds, censuses, historic maps, vital records, probate records, visual assessment

Style/Form: Gothic Revival

Architect/Builder: unknown

Exterior Material:

Foundation: brick

Wall/Trim: wood clapboard/wood

Roof: asphalt shingle

Outbuildings/Secondary Structures:
Garage (attached)
sheds

Major Alterations *(with dates)*:
Exterior renovated w/ modern materials & windows
Wing added on east side
Garage added on north

Condition: fair

Moved: no ☒ yes ☐ **Date:**

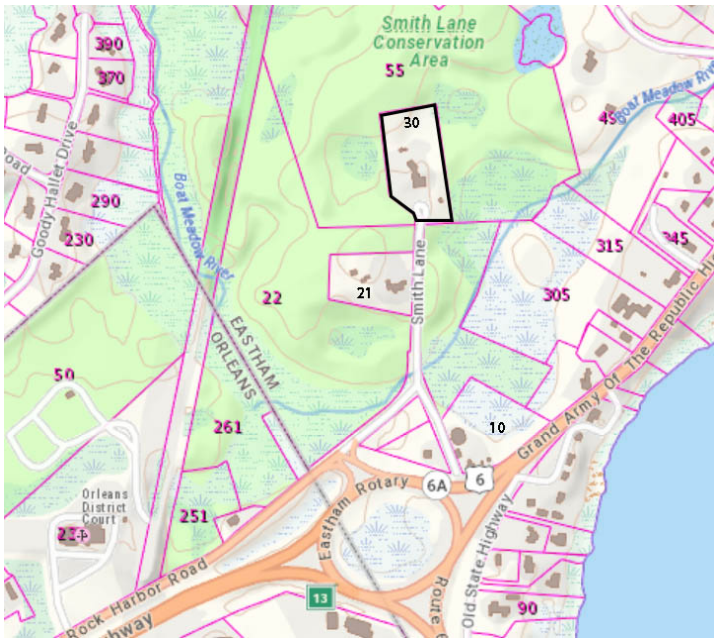
Acreage: 2.0

Setting: The property is located within the Smith Lane Conservation Area that was once part of the farm.

Photograph

View from south. (assessor's photo)

Locus Map (north at top)



Source: Mass GIS Oliver Parcel Viewer

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover & Neil Larson
Larson Fisher Associates

Organization: Eastham Historical Commission

Date: June 2020

☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The James & Thankful Smith House, built ca. 1854, is a two-story wood frame single dwelling with a three-bay front gable façade with an offset entrance indicating a side-passage plan. The upper stories have been altered by the replacement of three sash windows on the second floor with two narrow casements and the addition of a wide arched window in the apex of the gable. Two tiers of four replacement windows are contained in the west side wall. A one-story wing containing a pair of glazed doors on the front has been added to the east side. What appears to be an original one-story kitchen wing is attached to the rear; its fenestration has been renovated and a porch spans the recessed west façade. A large garage addition behind the kitchen wing is attached by a short hyphen.

The house is sited in the center of a two-acre parcel surrounded by lawn extending out to its boundary with the Smith Lane Conservation Area, which is comprised of farmland once associated with this house.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

On 10 June 1850, ten days before he died, Asa Smith (1785-1840) of Eastham wrote a will leaving his house, outbuildings, and twenty acres of upland, meadow, and swamp to his son James (1830-87) subject to his widow Polly Hurd Smith's use and improvement of the estate during her lifetime. The son of John Smith (born 1740) and Bathsheba Hickman (born 1743) of Orleans, Asa Smith married Polly (sometimes Mary) Hurd in Eastham about 1810, and he first appears in a household of six persons in the 1820 Eastham census. He and his wife had seven children—Clarington (1811-78), Samuel (born 1817), Sally (born 1819), Asa (1821-55), Joshua (1827-48), James, and Mary (born 1834). The 1850 census lists the widowed Polly Smith in this South Eastham neighborhood with her sons Benjamin and James, both mariners. In 1852 James Smith married Thankful L. Hopkins (1833-82) of Orleans, and two years later his brother Clarington, also of Orleans, sold his brother four acres of upland and swamp left to him in his father's will for $325; the parcel bordered James's land. The house now numbered 30 Smith Lane was either Asa's, and thus dates to 1810-20, or James's, perhaps built at the time of his marriage.[1]

The 1855 census lists Mary Hurd, her son James, by then a master mariner, and his wife Thankful in the same household. Polly Hurd Smith died in 1857, and in 1860 the census lists James Smith with $700 in real property in a household with his wife, their two-year-old son Wallace, and boarding master mariner Sylvanus Freeman and his wife Sarah. By 1870 the three Smiths had no boarders; James Smith was listed in that year's census as a farmer with $1080 in real estate. In 1882 Thankful Hopkins Smith died, and two years later James Smith married Mary E. Walker, the forty-year-old daughter of neighbors John and Hannah Walker. He died in 1887 of gastritis and "exhaustion from shipwreck," but no information about that shipwreck has yet been found.

The 30 Smith Lane property passed to the Smiths' only son, Wallace A., who married Olive Amanda Snow of Orleans scarcely two months after his father died. The couple are shown in the neighborhood in the 1900 census, and the name "W. A. Smith" is attached to the house on the 1905 Eastham map. By 1910, however, they were living separately, Wallace doing odd jobs and living in the Eastham house and Olive working as a housekeeper in Somerville. She died in 1917, and in both 1920 and 1930 Wallace A Smith is listed in censuses as a widowed truck farmer living alone.

Wallace A. Smith died in 1934, and in some manner not documented through title search the 30 Smith Lane property came to be owned by Lamont Eldredge Smith (1899-1961), whose connection, if any, to this branch of the vast Smith family is not yet known.[2] Lamont E. Smith claimed to have been born in Somerville, and in 1900 he was boarding with his mother Eunice Eldredge Smith in Medford. By 1910 his mother sent him to Harwich to live with his widowed grandmother, Abbie F. Kelley. By 1918 he was attending Sheffield Scientific School at Yale University; his mother was by then working as a seamstress in Evergreen, Colorado, but by 1924 she had returned to Medford. By 1937 Lamont Smith was an executive at Franco Central Oil

[1] Clarington Smith, Orleans, to James Smith, 29 November 1854, BCD 89:123; the deed's description of the property closely matches Asa Smith's description of it in his will. In 1864 James Smith bought another 1.25 acres in the same area from Richard Smith and Hinckley Lincoln (BCD 90:416 and 417).
[2] No record of Lamont E. Smith's birth is found on Massachusetts vital records are, and the identity of his father is not yet known.

Company in Wichita, Kansas, and he was president of the company by 1961, the year he died. Where and when he married Mary Amelia Pfeffer (1900-74), a native of Blue Earth, Minnesota, are not known.

In 1947 Lamont Smith subdivided the larger property and sold 30 Smith Lane on a two-acre parcel to Ellsworth E. and Ethel Mae Brown of Orleans (the deed fails to cite title). Ellsworth Everett Brown (1924-2004) was born in Fairhaven and had moved with his parents and siblings to South Orleans by 1940. He served in the Army during World War II, and in 1946 he married Ethel May Harper (1927-90) of Boston. The Browns had at least two children—Philip John (1951-2012) and Leroy (1956-2008). The Browns owned 30 Smith Lane until 1979, when they sold it to William P. and Laura M. Sullivan "to be held as a homestead." The Sullivans placed the property in trust in 2012, and Sullivan Realty Trust was owner of record in 2020.[3]

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MAPS
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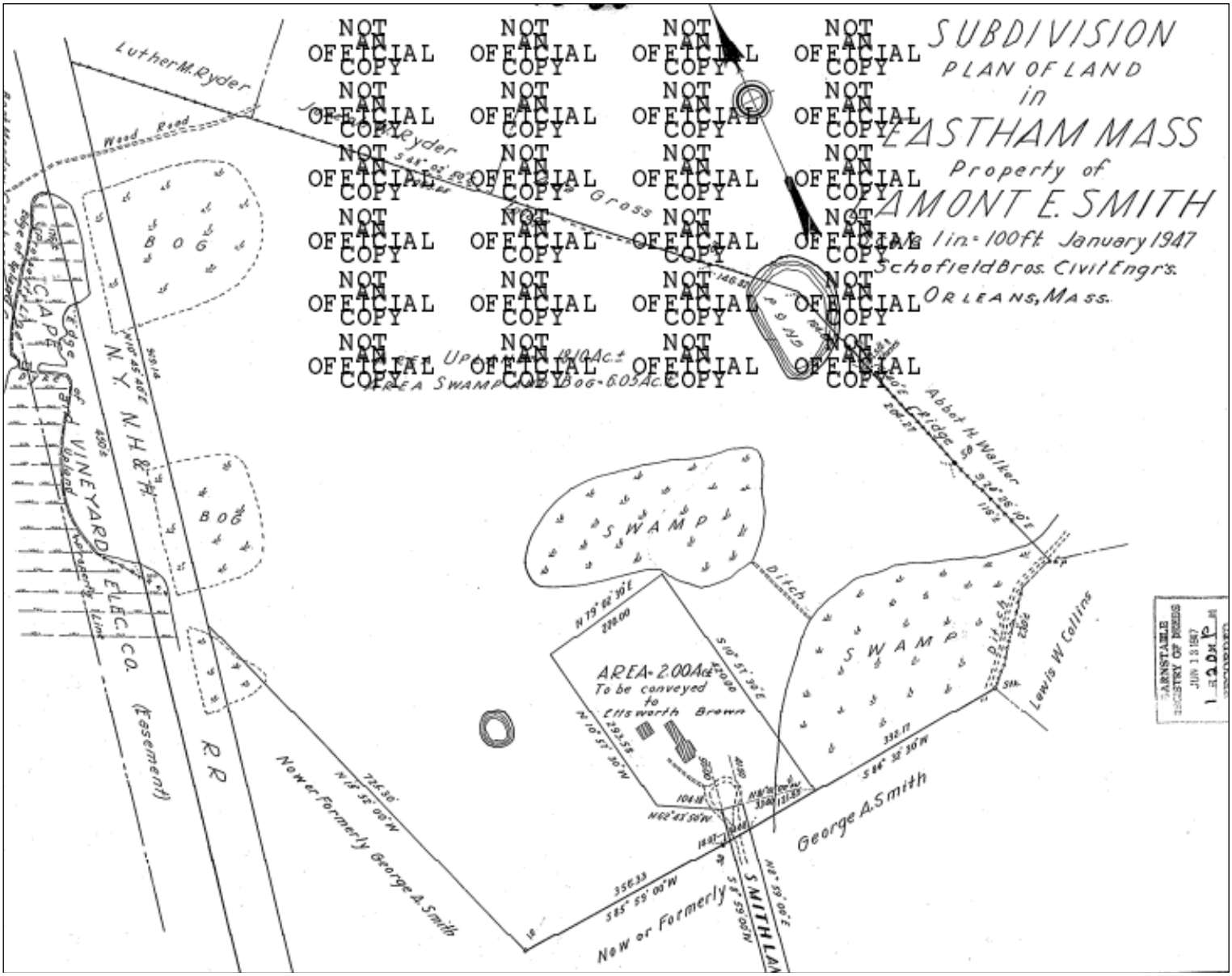
[3] Lamont E. Smith, Wichita KS, to Ellsworth L. and Ethel Mae Brown, Orleans, 24 March 1947, BCD 668:206; Ellsworth L. and Ethel Mae Brown, Smith Lane, to William P. and Laura M. Sullivan, 1 June 1979, BCD 2929:126; William P. and Laura M. Sullivan to William P. and Laura M. Sullivan, trustees Sullivan Realty Trust, 9 July 2012, BCD 26509:14. See also "Subdivision Plan of Land in Eastham, Mass. Property of Lamont E. Smith," January 1947, BCP 78:83.

SUPPLEMENTAL IMAGES



Two months before he sold the 30 Smith Lane house and its outbuildings to Ellsworth E. and Ethel Mae Brown, Lamont E. Smith subdivided the larger parcel and sold the house with a two-acre lot (BCP 78:83).

PHOTOGRAPHS

(credit Larson Fisher Associates, 2019 unless otherwise noted)

View from west. Assessor photo.

View from west. Assessor photo.